



VOL. XX.

AUGUSTA, MAINE. THURSDAY MORNING, MAY 6, 1852.

NO. 19.



"Our Home, our Country, and our Brother Man."

### THE WINTER WHEAT CROP.

The past autumn and winter has been one that has given the winter wheat crop in Maine a different trial from what it has undergone since the recent experiments in raising it. Maine has commenced. The autumn was dry. On this account much that was sown got but little growth before the snow came on. The snow was but little in the ground when the snow fell. The snow has laid up on the ground until the middle of April, forming a deep and continued covering from the latter part of November until the middle of April. It has been found, by experiment, that wheat will endure the steady, uninterrupted cold of our winters without any covering—that if sown early in autumn, covered to a good depth, and allowed to get good growth of root, it will bear the freezing and thawing of our spring season well. But how it will bear a drought in autumn, which checks its growth, and then being covered up deeply in snow five months, is a new question which the past winter will answer before reaping time.

At present, most of the fields that we have seen have a healthy appearance, although there are patches which appear to be killed either by water standing on it under the snow, or there was something like a fermentation produced—if such a thing can take place in snow—which has apparently killed it.

We hope the coming crop will be a good one—though if it should not, we trust our farmer will not become discouraged. It will take many years to learn all the requirements in cultivating winter wheat among us. We have been told, that in one of the counties of New York, at an early period, it took the farmers twenty years of experiment and observation to become thoroughly acquainted with the best processes of cultivating it; and even now they occasionally lose their crop.

So it will be here. So it is here now with many of our most common crops. Our grass crop fails us not unfrequently, but nobody thinks of giving up the hay crop because sometimes their grass becomes winter killed, or spring killed, or killed by the droughts of summer.

### RAISING POTATOES FROM SLIPS.

We find in Hovey's Magazine of Horticulture, for April, remarks quoted from the Gardener's Journal, (English), respecting a new method of preventing the potato rot, by raising, or rather renewing the potato from slips. The theory adopted by the writer is, as far as we can learn, this: The potato by long culture from the tuber has become debilitated and deficient in starch. He therefore conceived that it might be re-invigorated by a different mode of culture. He accordingly took the slips or sprouts from the potato, and by carefully setting them out, he has derived potatoes which are much better in quality than those raised in the ordinary method. We will abridge his remarks for the benefit of our readers.

Last year, says he, we gave the result of an analysis, showing the difference in potatoes grown by the usual system and our own from prepared cuttings—11 per cent. of starch was the result of the former, and 15 1/2 the latter. We have now again gone through the same process, those of our own being the variety called York Regents, now two years removed by prepared cuttings from the old stock. The result is beyond our expectation, (17 per cent.) and from the same class, the best we could procure, only 10 1/2 per cent., giving a preponderance of more than one third in favor of those produced by cuttings, which justifies us in the opinion we hold that until the proper quantity of saccharine matter is restored to that valuable root we cannot expect they will produce a healthy offspring.

We lost more than one half of those planted out in April last and early in May, by frost: those planted after the 20th of May, and up to the first week in June, were full crops, and ripened well by the middle of October. In every thing novel improvements are found out. None ought to be planted (with cuttings) before the middle of May, leaving the top of the cutting or plant one or two inches above the ground, and water them once, should the land be dry.

We planted, last year, five acres with potatoes, the produce of 1850; they continued in a growing state until the middle of October, the haul of all other potatoes being withered.

Early in the season, in one year more, we trust to get that most useful root up to its original standard, when the expensive mode of planting with cuttings will not be required.

There is no part of the potato taken with the cuttings. The potatoes must be put in a warm place, or on a good heat, [in the hot bed to start the sprouts], as it is important that the cutting should be as short a time as possible on the mother plant, as all potatoes, more or less, that do not contain the proper quantity of starch, are diseased so far that they cannot produce a healthy offspring.

It is now six years since we first commenced planting cuttings. Our attention was first drawn to it by the well known advice a medical man would give to a rearing child of a mother in a deep decline, which would be brought up (as it is termed) by hand, or by getting a healthy nurse.

loss worthy the consideration of farmers, and although the mode recommended may be a slow and expensive process, if carried out on a large scale, yet it may be practised in a limited way, and should it be instrumental in re-invigorating the crop, it will be time and labor well expended.

### GRAPES FROM OLD TREES.

A friend, who read the reports of the discussion upon fruit and fruit culture at the State House, and observed Mr. Foster's remarks, that scions from old trees were as good as those from young trees, refers us to the theory first broached by Mr. Knight, of England. Mr. Knight was an experienced Horticulturist, and brought forward the theory that a graft from a tree would flourish no longer than did the parent. A great deal of discussion has been had upon this idea, and a great many facts have been brought forward by the advocates for and against it. There are yet as many opponents to the theory as there are believers in it.

Our friend refers us to Mr. Josiah Newhall's address before the Essex County Agricultural Society in 1848, where he says:

"Great care should be taken to select such varieties as are known to be productive and of vigorous growth. There are many kinds of excellent quality but so unproductive as not to be fit for extensive cultivation. Care should also be taken not to select varieties growing old and declining. I very well know that different opinions are entertained in relation to the duration of vigorous existence of trees. It is the belief of some that any given variety of fruit may be continued, and profitably cultivated indefinitely; and that the apparent decline of some old varieties, is owing to a want of care and good culture. This view of the subject I think must be erroneous, and lead to disappointment and loss. In the first place proof to demonstration of the decay of old fruit trees, is seen in specimens which have been growing in the country from its early settlement; many of which have entirely decayed. Scions from others which have been grafted on thrifty seedling stocks, although they still live, bear every mark of old age,—while the under branches of the young stocks upon which the old scions were inserted, annually produced a vigorous growth.

In the second place, such a theory is unphilosophical and repugnant to natural laws. Through out the whole system of organized being we see an incessant increase, a full maturity, and a state of decay, and finally, of death. There is nothing immortal "in this diurnal scene." If a man should tell you that he possessed an animal that would never die, or that he himself would live forever, you would consider him insane. Nature has made provision for the continuance of species by seed; and when it is stated that some of the fruits now extant were cultivated in the time of Julius Caesar, the highest probability exists that they are the reproduction from seed of those ancient fruits; and bearing so near a resemblance to their parents as to be mistaken for the same."

He also refers to the address of Mr. Asa T. Newhall, delivered before the same society in 1849, who, in speaking of orcharding, says:

"We cannot prolong the existence of any particular kind of fruit, by engraving from old to young trees, beyond the natural life of the original tree, or the time it would cease to bear fruit by old age, if living. We must go back to the seed for a new generation. If I am correct, the importance of budding or engraving our nurseries from new varieties must be apparent, as an orchard of a variety that is not more than twenty or thirty years old, will last seventy or eighty years longer than one of an hundred years old—two hundred years being considered the age of the apple tree. I am aware that there are many who will smile at the idea that a scion taken from an old and placed upon a young tree, continues to number its years. They say that its age is renewed as soon as it is supported by the sap of the young tree—that it has no affinity to the old tree. If so, why is not the fruit changed? If the scion, when transmitted to the young stock, does not retain the identity of its nature and species, how could it produce the same fruit of the parent tree?"

Mr. President, if the doctrine be true that by budding or engraving from older to younger trees, any species of fruit may be perpetuated through all time, then the fatal apple that grew in the Garden of Eden, by the same process might have been transmitted to us, and our wives might have been plucking the fruit, and giving it to their husbands.

But it cannot be so. We might as well undertake to renew the age of an old cow by turning her into a new pasture, as the age of any species of fruit by engraving from old to young trees. It is true that if the cow was better fed her hair might look more sleek and glossy, but it would not diminish a wrinkle upon her horn."

There are many facts for and against this theory. We know some apples, the original trees of which are not over seventy years old from the seed, that were quite celebrated in their neighborhood, but have now become degenerated, and bear poor, scabby fruit—and so do the scions from them. On the other hand, we have varieties of apples still flourishing fresh and fair, the original trees of which were first brought into notice two hundred years ago. For instance, the old Pearmain and the Ribston Pippin. The original trees of the Roxbury Russet and the Rhode Island Greening are probably gone down to the dust years ago, yet these varieties are still robust and vigorous among us. The original Baldwin tree is gone, but its descendants are full of vigor yet.

Still it must not be denied that most of the famous apples, that were known in England during the last century, can no longer be found as flourishing and of the same quality that they used to possess. From these contradictory facts, it would seem to be doubtful if Knight's theory should be taken in an unlimited and an unqualified sense.

FLOWING HEADLANDS. We observe that this is often inconveniently and awkwardly done. The best way is to leave strips of untouched land at the sides as well as at the ends of the field all of equal width, and then the whole is finished by going round with one continuous furrow until it is finished close to the fence. In this way none of the newly plowed ground is trodden hard.

### THE KITCHEN GARDEN. No. 2.

In the further prosecution of our design we propose to furnish brief directions for the cultivation of the more important and useful garden vegetables which are adapted to the soil and climate of Maine. Although we shall avail ourselves of the limited experience and observation we possess in relation to these matters, so far as we can consistently, yet we do not aim so much at originality, as to furnish from authentic sources, directions which may be of use to the inexperienced gardener. We desire that the topics discussed shall not be greatly out of season; and in order that the series shall not be extended to too great a length, we shall omit the notice of the gooseberry, currant and strawberry, as appropriately coming under the head of fruit culture, although we consider them worthy an important place in every garden. It is not our intention, in these articles, to treat of those plants which frequently have a place in the garden, but are more generally cultivated as field crops.

ASPARAGUS. This is a well known perennial plant, and it is worthy of a place in every garden. The young shoots, which are ready for the table so early in the season, are considered among our greatest delicacies. Asparagus may be propagated from the seed, which should be sown in drills about the first of May, and covered an inch and a half deep. The young plants ought not to stand in the drills nearer than six or eight inches apart. The ground should be kept loose and free from weeds. When the stalks become withered in the fall, they should be cut close to the ground, and then cover the bed with an inch or two of rotten dung, overlaid with coarse stable litter. In the following spring, just after the buds start, the plants should be deep planted. The best soil for the bed is a deep, mellow, sandy loam, open to the sun. The ground should be spaded thoroughly to the depth of three feet, and a large quantity of well rotted dung should be intimately mixed with it. Indeed the productiveness and sweetness of the shoots depend altogether upon the fertility of the soil. About six pounds of salt should be added to the dressing for every square rod the bed contains. It has been observed that the proper preparation of the ground, in the outset, is of more importance than the after-management. The plants are carefully set in the bed at distances of twelve or fourteen inches apart, with the crowns about two inches below the surface. When the tops turn white, at the approach of winter, they may be cut close to the ground, and removed. The bed should then receive a top-dressing of good, rotten dung, about three inches thick, together with a covering of leaves, litter, or even a little rich soil. The top-dressing of manure, the following spring, is to be mixed with the soil on the surface of the bed, care being taken not to injure the crowns of the roots with the fork. In this way a healthy growth of the roots may be secured. A little salt may be sprinkled on the bed, and raked in, to advantage, every season.

No portion of the crop ought to be gathered previous to the fourth season after sowing the seed. In the first three summers, the stalks must be allowed to grow up at will, in order that the roots may strengthen themselves, so as after that time to yield an annual supply of sprouts for the table. Cutting may commence the fourth spring, when the shoots are about four inches high, the top buds being close and firm. Scrape away a little dirt from each shoot, and cut it off in a slanting direction, about three inches below the surface, by means of a narrow, sharp pointed knife. The cutting season should not be extended beyond the 20th of June. A healthy bed, under good management, will bear abundantly for ten or twelve years.

By transplanting old roots, a crop may be obtained one or two years sooner than it can be raised from the seed. To cook asparagus, cut off the tough, white part of the stalks, and put the remainder into small bundles, and boil them from fifteen to twenty minutes, according to their age. A very little salt added in the water will preserve the fresh, green color of the asparagus. A little salt should be put in the stew pan. Toast a large slice of bread, and lay it in the bottom of a vegetable dish. Then moisten the toast with a little water from the stew pan and butter it. When the asparagus is taken up and drained, it is to be laid on the toast, and the strings are removed. Serve with melted butter, and salt to the taste. (Condensed from Schenck's Gardener's Text Book.)

The Horticulturist, edited by A. J. Downing, which may be considered as good authority in these matters, furnishes the following relative to the cultivation of German Greens, Sea Kale and Salsify—plants which are little known or cultivated in this State. The article was written for the latitude of New York, and vegetation is nearly a month more forward there, in the spring, than it is with us. If we can have them ready by the first of May, it is doing pretty well, especially in seasons as cold and backward as the present.

"What ought a good gardener to have ready for the table, simply in the open air, by the first of April? Let us see: German Greens, Sea Kale, Salsify, Rhubarb, Asparagus, Spinach. This is a respectable show, yet every good kitchen gardener in the Northern States ought to furnish it as a matter of course, and will do so with a very little care. I shall say a word or two about some of the vegetables.

GERMAN GREENS, or SIBERIAN KALE. The Horticulturist first made this vegetable known to thousands in this country. In Germany and Russia it has been cultivated for a hundred years. It is, in reality, a sort of kale or cabbage, growing with spreading leaves like a turnip—but the leaves are more crumpled or curled. It is one of the hardiest of all vegetables—will grow in any soil, and stand all kinds of weather. As soon as the spring opens it commences to grow, and the leaves are fit, in a week after, to cut for boiling. It is cooked and served up just like any other kind of "greens," and is something in flavor, between cauliflowers and asparagus—very excellent. The seeds are planted broadcast, like turnips, in August and September, and twenty feet square will supply a family. It is emphatically a poor man's vegetable, requiring so little attention, and affording so much food; it will hold its place in the best garden where it is once afforded a trial.

SEA KALE. I think this is a vegetable too seldom seen in this country. I do not remember to have found it for sale in any of the city markets more than once or twice. I suppose this is because it demands a little attention in the spring, and besides, it does not yield so large crops as asparagus. The flavor is, however, more delicate to my taste than asparagus, and as it has the merit of being more of a novelty, the gardener should always have a bed of it about twelve by twenty or thirty feet. It wants a deep, rich soil, like asparagus, and beds made in the same way, answer well for sea kale. Sandy loam is the most congenial to it. To make beds of sea kale, sow the seeds in April, and thin them out, when well growing, so as to leave them about twelve inches apart. In the autumn cover the beds with a little manure, and over this spread three or four inches of black bog earth that has been well pulverized; or, if you have it at hand, tan bark will answer equally as well—charcoal dust is still better. Through this layer, the young shoots will rise in the spring, and force their way up in the manure, and the sea kale, like celery, must be washed. When you have cut over the bed twice, remove the loose materials, except the manure, which (with the addition of a slight sprinkling of refuse soil) may be lightly turned under. The plants then grow all summer, and at the end of autumn the blanch covering should be again renewed. Considering how much importance every body seems to attach to the asparagus bed, it is surprising how little sea kale is known. I am sure if one half the ground usually devoted to asparagus, were occupied by a permanent bed of sea kale, it would give more variety, and more satisfaction at the dinner table.

SALSIFY, or the "vegetable oyster," as its name implies, is a now pretty generally cultivated, and a limited supply of it may be had in many of our markets. It is as easily raised as asparagus, if the seeds are planted early in April, in the same way—but it should have a place in the richest part of the garden. As the salsify is an excellent winter vegetable, and may be left out in the beds all winter without any injury by the frost, and is unquestionably the most delicate and agreeable of all the root vegetables, there is no reason for its very limited culture. I presume that many who plant it, fail because they sow the seeds too late."

Schenck makes the following remarks relative to the use of this plant. "Salsify is a valuable addition to every family garden worthy of the name, and particularly to those in the interior of the country, where the oyster cannot readily be obtained. The tender shoots of the second year's growth, when some four or five inches high, make an excellent substitute for asparagus. The root is palatable and wholesome—being good, is said, no consumptive patients to particular. The following is the method of preparing artificial oysters. After the root has been scraped, and laid in water for several minutes, in order to abstract a part of its bitter flavor, it is to be boiled tender, and either cut in thin slices, or grated and pressed into little cakes, of the size of oysters. Dip the slices, or cakes, into a batter made of wheat flour, milk and eggs; roll them in crumbled bread or crackers; and then drop them into hot lard. When of a light brown color, they are sufficiently cooked, and ready to be carried to the table."

RADISHES. Radishes may be sown in the open air in April, or May, and if a succession of crops is desired, every fortnight thereafter through the summer. A mellow, dry soil, made tolerably fertile, is required. The seed may be sown in drills eight inches apart, and they should be thinned to stand from two to four inches apart, in the drills, according to the variety. We have found it beneficial to cover the bed with ashes to the depth of half an inch, at the time of sowing, which will aid the growth and serve to protect the plants from the ravages of insects. A regular application of water is also an advantage, particularly in time of drought. The radish is eaten raw, and when young and tender is highly relished by most persons. We have raised radishes in the open air, without any protection, and with ordinary treatment, in thirty days from the time of sowing. For seed, let a few of the most thrifty early plants remain.

LETTUCE. Lettuce is a hardy annual, and is excellent as a salad—perhaps better than anything else sown. Sow early in the spring in drills eight inches apart, and the larger varieties should be thinned out to four inches apart in the drills. Keep the bed free from weeds, and the soil loose and porous. Several sowings should be made if a succession of crops is desired. Schenck recommends, for early spring sowing, the Brown Dutch, the Early Cabbage and the Drumhead varieties.

### THE CURCULIO.

Any method which promises to protect the plum trees from the ravages of this destructive insect is worthy of attention and trial. When the habits of the curculio are better understood, we shall probably hit upon some method to trap him and save at least a part of the plums. The Boston Journal publishes the following communication, which will doubtless be interesting to many of our readers: "A gentleman in Reading says, take cotton bawls, and put three circles, from six to twelve inches apart, around the bodies of your plum trees. Its caught sixty curculios in the first circle in twenty-four hours; while but few had been caught in the second circle, and scarcely one got to high as the third. He found this a sure preventive, and got lots of fine plums last year, for the first time for many years. The practice of the writer has been to pay the children six cents a quart for all the windfalls, and keep the ground clean. The windfalls should be destroyed, as they contain the maggot, (as with apples and all other fruits.) From which they go into the ground, and the curculio is propagated. I found this course to be of service, and got large quantities of plums. The two methods may be combined."

A correspondent of the Albany Cultivator, who writes from Birmingham, Conn., furnishes the following: "The remedy I have to propose is a trough of sheet lead, (or other suitable material) placed around the trunk of the tree, and partially filled with oil. This was tried on a single plum tree, during the past season, by Mr. Robert N. Bassett, of this town, with results as favorable as could have been expected under the circumstances. The season was too far advanced, and most of the fruit had been stung when it was applied. On the first morning after the application, he found a considerable number of the curculios drowned in the oil, and in the course of the season, a few of the plums, which had not been previously stung, remained untouched, and in a healthy state."

This application was suggested to Mr. B. by his finding several curculios on the trunk of the tree, which he supposed were making their way up; and by his observing that when he allowed those he had taken to fly off, they never rose, but invariably took a downward direction. His inference was that they usually, at least, reached the top of the tree by climbing up its trunk, and, therefore, that any obstruction placed around the trunk, would prevent their reaching the top."

The success of the circles of cotton batting and the oil trough both appear to be based on the assumed fact that the curculio climbs up the trunk of the tree to commit its ravages, and if such are its habits, they may prove effectual remedies. At any rate we consider them worthy of trial, and the matter may be soon tested to the satisfaction of all."

For the Farmer.  
FRUIT TREES—KINDS FOR CULTIVATION.  
FRIED HOLMES.—Our pomological friends have at length taken hold of this subject with a true and laudable zeal, inasmuch as they have given the results of actual experience in fruit growing. Our Maine farmers, who "take the papers," can now choose for themselves, from selected lists by those who have fully proved them, such fruits as may be depended upon as adapted to this climate, rather than trust to the high sounding names and super-excellent qualities which swell some of the catalogues. If those varieties, of high repute abroad, but which, upon trial, do not succeed well here, could be published in a rejected instead of a select list, we should at once know which to choose and to refuse. I have just read with much interest the remarks of A. J. Jr., on "Apples and Peas." He begins at the root of the subject, in the preparation of the soil to receive the tree which is now destined to shoot "upward and onward." He also shows us that there is a fair prospect for an unlimited market for our surplus fruit. A few years' experience in raising fruit trees and fruit canisters will coincide very nearly with his selection. I will, however, modestly ask if he would not wish to add to his list of winter apples some late keeping variety—such as the Roxbury Russet, if nothing better can be found? Should the Northern Spy succeed as well here as in New York, its native State, it will evidently be what is needed for a late apple. For five years' experience with the trees we have found it more hardy than the Baldwin, but as it is first fruited with us last season we are not prepared to decide upon its merits. It is a strong grower, and the fruit now commands a high price in the western markets. The Ribston Pippin, although an excellent and profitable fruit, does not keep with us as long as the Baldwin and Greening.

I think our friend made no mention of sweet apples in this list. Shall we not add some hard winter sweeting?—as some of us may have rather a sour temper and need more of the saccharine than the acetous flavor. The Talisman Sweeting is probably more extensively cultivated than any other in New England, and is good and profitable. The Seaver and Ramsdell's Sweetings are good growers and in high repute. The Ladies' Sweeting, (a fruit recently brought into notice,) has become very popular in some sections, but it should be rejected in this vicinity. In a recent letter from a friend whom we furnished with scions of this variety, he says, "I fear our Ladies' Sweeting will prove a failure, as they appear to be badly killed. H. Little, of Bangor, told me that they did not do any thing there, which corresponds with your remarks to Dr. Johnson, of Dixmont." I have taken the liberty to give the above statement to the public, as there is now quite a demand for the trees and scions. Our experience with the Winter Nels did not differ from A. J.'s statement—"trees not vigorous." We obtained trees of this variety with the Flemish Beauty, from Massachusetts, and set them side by side. All of the Winter Nels died, while the Flemish have flourished. We can recommend this highly for hardiness and fine fruit. For a delicious early pear the Julienne has succeeded best with us. Fearing this will infringe upon that "talk next week," I will close, and remain a friend to fruit-growers.

S. N. T.  
Vassalboro'.

### SEEDING DOWN LAND.

For the Maine Farmer.  
Mr. Editor:—As the hay crop is the most valuable crop of our State, it is of great importance that farmers should understand the best method of seeding down. I have seen many valuable hints in the Maine Farmer, on the subject, but do not recollect of recently seeing any thing said upon one point which I consider of vital importance. I allude to covering the grass seed too deep. I believe that a large proportion of our farmers harrow in their seed. Now, it ought to be known to every one that but very few grass seeds will vegetate, if covered to the depth of one inch, and not any sown to the depth of two inches; consequently, if the land is thoroughly harrowed after the seed is sown, not more than half of it ever comes up.

Some who call themselves farmers, wash their grain and then mix the grass seed with it, and sow it all together. This, to be sure, is a saving of time, but it is a "saving at the tap and letting out at the bung hole," for it is the worst possible way. Not only must the grass seed be harrowed in as deep as the grain, but it is impossible to sow it even—the grass seed, especially timothy and red-top, being lighter than the grain, as it becomes detached from the grain, falls far short of the grain, over seeding some parts, and leaving other parts with little or no grass. Any one may satisfy himself of this by throwing one handful and watching it as it falls. I have been very successful in seeding down land, not having failed of getting a good catch for the last thirty years. The following is my uniform plan: I sow a rounding half bushel of the best seed I can get to the acre, mixed as I fancy; usually twelve quarts timothy, or timothy and red-top, and the remainder northern clover. This I sow on even ground, or where the grain has been thoroughly harrowed in and even-harrowed. I then pass a roller or bush over it, and never fail of a good catch, let the weather be what it will. On stony land I prefer the roller, as it buries the small stones out of the way of the scythe.

I always pass over the field the last thing with a hoe, and level the sods and bunches of dirt that may be left, and find it a saving of time even in the first mowing.

It is a light job for any one who understands how to sow a field evenly to grass seed. Though old and feeble, I can sow an acre even in forty-five minutes with ease. I have seen men spend hours in scattering grass seed over an acre, and then have it come up in bunches. I would advise such to get a neighbor to sow it for them.

JOHN H. WILLARD.  
Wilton, April 10th, 1852.

For the Maine Farmer.  
WINTER KILLING.  
Mr. Editor:—I noticed in your last paper an article upon "Winter Killing," by H. Sylvester, of Leeds; in which he enquires the cause of winter grain's killing out, after being long buried under a thick bed of snow. Perhaps we do not, any of us know exactly what the true cause is; but I will make a suggestion or two, which, if not exactly "hitting the nail on the head," may serve to keep the subject open till others have an opportunity to advance more correct ideas.

When we have very deep snows, they are not usually carried off (except by warm rains) until quite late in the spring, when the days are long and the sun shines quite warm.

All farmers know that when the snow bank first disappears, the grain plants look quite green; but a few days exposure to a hot sun, soon withers them; and the temperature at night being quite cold,—sometimes freezing,—the roots, as well as the tops, are destroyed. The plant, having been so long sheltered from the changes of our variable climate by the thick blanket of snow, is very tender, and is easily destroyed by the causes I have previously suggested.

But, if the snow goes easily—of course it goes gradually—the sun's power is but small, and the plant becomes inured to the vicissitudes of the weather gradually, and, reasoning from analogy, it stands a better chance of escaping with life.

But if the snow does not leave the ground till late in the spring, after the sun has attained a great degree of power, the plants will escape destruction on dry land, provided, that several days of dull, cloudy weather ensue immediately after the disappearance of the snow banks. This cloudy weather gives the wheat a chance to get inured to the atmospheric influences of the season.

As I remarked at the outset, I am not an oracle, but have merely given my opinion. Perhaps others will be willing to give theirs through the same medium.

H.

Written for the Maine Farmer.

### GRAFTING CEMENT.

As the season for grafting is at hand, I am willing to throw our method of making and applying grafting cement into common stock, and if it proves beneficial to any, my wishes will be answered. To one pint of linseed oil we add four lbs. of rosin and two lbs. of beeswax melted together, and apply warm with a small painter's brush. It can be put on in less than half the time it requires to apply in cold and with the hand. We have used it in this way for the two past seasons with success. We have coated cloth with cement and applied for ten years past, and find nothing to equal it for splice grafting or budding.

D. TARKER.  
Vassalboro', 4th mo., 1852.

PLANTING OUT ELMS. A Philadelphia correspondent of the Horticulturist, states, that in setting out a hundred elms from the forest about 18 feet high, and as large as a man's arm he fully tested the advantage of heading back. The tops were so handsome that he was reluctant to touch them, he accordingly left a part entire, and shortened back the remainder about one-third, to correspond with the necessary shortening of the roots outside of the large balls.

Few trees were lost; most of those with entire heads made little or no growth the first year, and many limbs died and had to be cut out. Of those cut back, all lived; and their leaves the first summer were three times as large as the unpruned trees. They have outstripped the others so much, as to have entirely regained the symmetry and beauty of their heads.

A man's owning a large farm is no excuse for bad tillage. What he cannot improve, he need not undertake to cultivate.

### AMOUNT OF BUTTER FROM ONE COW.

For the Maine Farmer.  
Dr. HOLMES.—I am not much of an agriculturist, but I have a small two-acre farm, which I keep under as high a state of cultivation as my limited means will admit. My stock consists of a horse, a cow, and thirty-four hens. My cow is an extra animal, and I very much doubt whether or may can be found in the State, that will produce as large an amount of butter in a year as she will, with the same keeping. My wife commenced making butter from her the 10th of May last, and between that time and the 1st of February, she made two hundred and seventy-five pounds, (275.) Best this who can? Perhaps it will be said that our cow had extra feed, and that the generality of cows would produce as much butter as she, if they were only as highly fed. This is a mistake. She had no extra feed from the first of February to the first of October. I then began to feed her with corn fodder and carrot tops; and when these were gone, I gave her half a bushel of carrots per day through the months of November, December and January. She is eight years old, well built and handsome, gives the best quantity of milk, is pacific and gentle in disposition, and in my estimation is worth three common cows. If any person in the State has a cow that has done as well, or better than this, I hope he will make the fact public through the Farmer.

E. WELLINGTON.  
Alton, April 21, 1852.

### RURAL ARCHITECTURE.

A house, for instance is a thing to live in—not a thing to be looked at; and we go against any sacrifice of comfort, or convenience, for the sake of mere show. We have yet to learn that it is expedient to spoil the chambers of a house, for the sake of a severely Gothic roof; or that expensive verandas are more important than a good kitchen, and large, and well-ventilated bed-rooms.

The great object in choosing a plan for a dwelling, or other building, is to combine a good degree of architectural beauty with the accommodations wanted, and to adapt the whole to the purpose in view. Much depends on having the building adapted to the place where it is to stand, and distinctly expressive of the idea of the builder.

Want of attention to this point betrays a want of taste, and should be guarded against. A man about to build a house, and applying to an architect for a plan, should insist upon having him visit the spot where it is to stand; and if the architect shall attempt to draw the plan and elevation, without reference to the locality, he may be set down as one who is deficient, as regards a knowledge of his business. The more of the author of these suggestions is a very respectable affair, on his face—but where else it would be abundantly out of place. While, therefore, we are inclined to give the preference to certain styles of rural architecture, we are not in favor of a monstrous uniformity. Recognizing the legitimate claims of the old and approved orders, we would have our buildings various in their character, and in keeping with all that is peculiar in the scenery, or noticeable in the conditions of those who are to occupy them. [Ohio Farmer.]

### AGRICULTURAL SHOWS.

A writer in the Ohio Cultivator, discoursing on the above subject, thus hits at some of the prominent benefits derived from shows of this character.

1. By stimulating us to greater effort to obtain that knowledge which shall enable us to excel in the particular operations which we have chosen. And this knowledge may in a measure be obtained by witnessing the skill of others, and learning their modes of operation.

2. By a comparison of our own productions with those of others.

3. By comparing farm stock; every farmer desires to keep the most profitable kinds of cattle, sheep and hogs; and how can he know that he has got them unless he compares with his neighbor. There he will see exhibited the best specimens of all domestic animals, and if better than his own, it will stimulate him to improvement.

4. By witnessing the different breeds of cattle, sheep, &c., and making himself acquainted with their peculiarities, he may be enabled to protect himself against the impostures which are frequently practiced upon the ignorant farmer, under the name of Durham Cattle, or French Merino Sheep, &c. How many of us have been woefully humbugged by the speculators, in consequence of our ignorance, when we ought to have known better.

Bees. In purchasing bees in the spring, rap on the hives, and if you hear a low continued buzz, they are populous and healthy; but if the sound, as you rap, is short and light, the bees are weak, and not of much value. If the combs are black, it is an old stock, if light colored, young, and the most desirable. If the combs are built in regular sheets, all parallel, and of about the same thickness, they are as they should be; but if you perceive thick clumps of combs, and some running at an angle with others, have nothing to do with such a family.

Remove your bees to a permanent location as early in April as possible, and avoid moving them thereafter. Contract the entrance, so that but one or two bees can pass at a time, if you feed several families at once outside the hives, as they will fight and destroy each other; but feed within the hives if you can. Honey is more apt to set before fighting than syrup or sugar.

Look out and don't get cheated by men who sell rights to feed bees on a pretended discovered compound, said to be better than the honey from flowers. It is the greatest humbug of the age, and we know of people who have been "taken in" by buying them. [Northern Farmer.]

TIME TO PLANT. There is no greater error extant, than that of planting gardens too early. If we have a few warm days in April, people run to their gardens, as if summer had actually come, and the seeds are sown, and the seeds are sown, and the seeds are sown, all in a sheet, that reminds of the dead of winter. Peas, onions and lettuce may be put into the ground quite early, as well as some other articles; but beans, melons, cucumbers and all seeds to be sown in beds, should never be put into the ground before May.

Order and system prevent waste and confusion.











## The Muse.

For the Farmer.  
TWILIGHT REVERIES.

BY TEDDY.

The dew is falling, soft and still,  
The shadows lengthen on the hill,  
Gray twilight spreads her misty veil  
Around the mountain, o'er the dale,  
And wakes in me a pensive feeling,  
Like mist o'er the water stealing.

The sun has sought his home of rest,  
The clouds in crimson robes are dressed;  
The hunter's horn in echoes dies,  
As to his humble cot he lies;  
And fainter, fainter, now is sighing  
The shadowy form of twilight dying.

The birds have ceased their merry song,  
The night hawk's screech is shrill and long,  
The timid fawn sleeps in her cave,  
And soft winds come from o'er the wave;  
While through the trees, "neath which I'm kneeling,  
The full moon's silver light is stealing.

The stars are shining in the sky,  
The "song queen" thrills her notes on high;  
Night has rounded her silent reign,  
But morn shall rend the misty chain,  
And o'er a world, now wrapp'd in dreaming,  
The morning light will soon be teeming.

New Sharon, April, 1892.

## THE OLD MAN'S GIFT.

'T was a beautiful gift, from a white-haired man,  
To his white-haired brother's hand,  
A staff for the weary to lean upon,  
As his steps to the grave were tending.

And he felt that nature requires support,  
Ere she sleeps on the lap of her mother;  
And he knew that a branch from his childhood's home  
Would sustain him as would no other.

Bearing his spirit through days long gone,  
To scenes of freshness and beauty,  
When the friends of his youth around him smiled,  
And life seemed a pleasant duty.

And friends still live, else why this gift,  
From a dear and distant brother?  
'Tis a simple thing, yet it speaks to the heart,  
As the voice of a gentle mother.

O! love in life's morn is beautiful,  
More beautiful at eve;  
May it bear ye both as a faithful staff  
To the weary gates of Heaven.

## The Story-Teller.

From the Olive Branch.  
THE TWIN COTTAGES.

BY PAUL GREYTON.

[CONCLUDED.]

CHAPTER IV.

The Building of the Cottages.

The awful occurrence of the morning cast a deep shadow of gloom over the old Felton house, for the remainder of the Sabbath. Even the youngest children seemed to be aware that they had been among them in an unusual form. Neither family went to church that day; nor did they eat together, or associate together, in any manner. Edward made a fire in the parlor, by the direction of his parents; and thither Lionel's family retired, leaving Richard in possession of the sitting-room.

"You needn't have any thing more to say to your uncle's people," said Martha to her children. "Did Uncle Richard strike father?" asked little Jane.

"Hush!" muttered Lionel. The sound of his brother's name made his brow contract with wrath.

Meanwhile, Richard was miserable. "I should not have struck my brother," he would say in his remorse; then in his anger and pride, he would add—"But he laid his hands upon my throat! I gave him warning. His hands upon my throat!"

In the evening, Richard saw Lionel leave the house. He did not return until late; and Richard with many misgivings, asked himself where his brother could have gone. He knew in the morning.

"Squire Stone came early to the house, and inquired for Richard. As the latter had not gone to work as usual, he was easily found; and the 'quire opened his business to him at once.

"I am very sorry to learn that there is some difficulty between you and your brother, Mr. Felton."

Richard scowled, looking the ground with his foot, and said nothing.

"I saw Lionel last night," pursued the 'quire. "He says he thinks a division of your property is necessary."

Richard started and turned pale; but he only murmured—"Well."

"Are you of the same way of thinking?" "I will agree to any thing reasonable."

"But this, Mr. Felton I think unreasonable. I told your brother so, and tried to dissuade him from it. But he is determined."

"He?" cried Richard, trembling with excitement. "Very well! Let the property be divided. I am willing."

"But you know this division will necessarily be a very difficult thing."

"Not so difficult but that it can be accomplished," said Richard, firmly.

"Squire Stone then saw Lionel, and after a conference with him, returned again to Richard. Unfortunately, 'Squire Stone had not the happy faculty of reconciling enemies; and his negotiation made matters worse. Before night, the division of the property was a settled affair, and the preliminary steps had been taken, to effect the important object. Arbiters were chosen to adjust the business, so that the brothers might not come in contact; for all this time they had never spoken to each other, since the fatal affray.

The directions Richard gave to his friends were—

"Divide the stock, the farming implements, the land—every thing, as you see fit. Act according to your judgment and friendship. Only one thing I insist upon—the site where we were going to build in the spring, must be included in the land which falls to my share." Now it so happened that Lionel had set his heart upon that building-plot.

"I must and will have that," said he, "if it be at the sacrifice of ten times as much land anywhere else."

With the building-plot in the way, the arbiters found the greatest difficulty in settling the division of property. At length, 'Squire Stone suggested that the lot itself should be divided.

"A good idea," said one of the arbiters; "we can run the line up to the north road, and cut the lot in the centre, giving the boys half and half."

This suggestion was reported to the brothers. "Very well," said Lionel; "divide it."

"Cut it in halves, then," were the words of Richard. "I care not, since he is not to have the whole."

The lot was accordingly divided, and the arbiters having come to a decision, a surveyor was appointed to run a line according to their directions. The necessary articles of agreement were then drawn up, to which the brothers were to put their names.

Until the last moment, Richard had hoped that some word of regret at the division of the property, would escape his brother; nor was it with-

out many misgivings, that Lionel saw the hour arrive, when the last tie between him and Richard was to be broken. The hand of the latter trembled, as he took the pen, to sign his name. He raised his eyes to his brother's face, to find there one kind look—one word of regret—at the moment he might take advantage, even to see if Richard would sign without an appeal to him for a brother's reconciliation. Pride restrained the better feelings of both, and with a nervous hand, Richard wrote his name. How angry with himself was he afterwards, to think that his hand trembled, while Lionel's was firm; and how the latter sneered, as he glanced his eye at the unsteady lines his brother had traced, in his agitation.

The deed was done, and henceforth the brothers possessed nothing in common. The old house had fallen to Richard's share; but Lionel was to occupy a certain portion of it, particularly designated in the articles of agreement, until he could build. The house, the cattle, the flocks of sheep, the poultry, the farming implements, the household furniture, even the timber which had been got out for the new house—every thing was divided. Even with the old house in his possession, Richard was resolved to put up as fine a cottage as his brother; in fact, having learned that Lionel proposed using the old plan, and building as close to the desirable site in the north line, in order not to be outdone by his brother.

While the Feltons were energetically making preparations to build, they lived in the old house in the most wretched manner imaginable. Maria never suffered her children to set foot in Martha's portion of the house, and the latter was quite as desirous to prevent all intercourse between the families; while Lionel and Richard avoided each other scrupulously, nor ever communicated, except through the medium of a third person.

The two families no longer sat together in church. The second Sabbath after the affray, both were present at the morning service; but the old pew was vacant. Unknown to each other, the brothers had hired separate pews in another part of the house. Richard cast his eye towards the old pew, to see how Lionel's family would look there alone; and Lionel, about the same time, glanced in the same direction, impelled by the same curiosity. Both were surprised to see the old pew vacant; but they were still more surprised when they eyes met, and they found that the new pews adjoined each other in the body of the house! However, as Lionel entered his pew from the right hand aisle, and Richard his from the left, and as it would require but little care on the part of the parents, to keep the children from getting together, neither of the families saw fit to change their seats again.

As soon as the frost was gone out of the ground in the spring, Lionel set his men at work on the northeast corner of his farm, close to Richard's line; and Richard at the same time employed laborers to dig a cellar on the southeast corner of his land, the object of the deleterious site which had formed the object of dispute. Means laid the two cellars at the same time, and worked as near each other, that it was easy for them to just about the strife between the brothers, talking across the line.

"It gives two good jobs to us and the carpenters," laughed one.

"So it does," replied the other. "People never make fools of themselves, without working for somebody's good. What will you bet but I will get my cellar done first?"

"A new hat for Sundays," was the answer. The hat was wagered, but neither won it; for the cellars were both finished on the same day, at the same hour.

Meanwhile the timbers were hewn, and the two master carpenters emulated each other in getting ready the frames. These were both finished at about the same time, and they might have been raised on the same day, but Lionel sent out his invitations to his neighbors before Richard; so that when the latter went round to his neighbors, to invite them to the raising-bee, he found to his chagrin that they were all engaged to his brother. In his anxiety to get the start of Richard, in putting up his cottage, he sent out invitations prematurely, and when his neighbors were on the spot, the carpenter declared, that do all he could, he had not been able to get ready for the raising. So Richard's house-frame was put up the following day, and Lionel's the day after.

It then became a matter of strife between the two families, to move, and get settled in their new houses, before each other. The frames were clapped-board, and the roofs shingled, in the most hasty manner; the doors were hung, and windows set, with the greatest possible despatch; then a few rooms were done off, to accommodate the families, until the rest could be finished. Both brothers now became strangely nervous; and Lionel, fearful of being preceded by Richard, made hasty preparations to move. Discovering these, Richard did the same; and the brothers went out into the twin cottages on the same day, almost before the paint and plastering were dry.

CHAPTER V.

Pleasant Neighbors.

Ill luck now appeared to attend all the undertakings of the two brothers who had formerly been noted for their good fortune. Richard, unaccustomed to take the lead in business, missed Lionel's cool head and practical judgment; and the latter began to feel the inconvenience of having none to second his efforts. When they worked together, success had always appeared easy and natural; and many a time both had reason to regret the fall of the hands of sticks.

But now, in the farming business, success, for the brothers were not so prosperous as formerly. From the day they moved into the twin cottages, every thing went wrong. The children took cold from the dampness of the freshly-plastered rooms, and there was sickness in both families.

Owing to the division of household furniture, both found themselves crippled for want of useful articles, which it was difficult to procure. A horse which nobody but Lionel could ever manage, but which had fallen to Richard's portion, kicked Jackson which laid him up all summer with broken ribs. Then Edward fell into the well Lionel was digging, and broke his arm, and Lionel himself got his fingers smashed beneath a beam, at the raising of his barn. Richard, overcome by anxiety of mind, had a fever, which left him a mere wreck, and from which he was long recovering. Both Martha and Maria, worn out by hard work in their new houses, were obliged to employ girls to help them; and girls are always great talkers to people who are accustomed to do their own work.

The expenses of building were so much greater than Richard had anticipated, and he had to employ so much extra help on the farm during the summer, that long before fall, he bitterly regretted not having remained in the old house five or six years longer. But having commenced, he would not be outdone by his brother; so he borrowed money to build exactly such a barn as Lionel was building, and to make every thing else correspond.

Richard had been in his new cottage a year, before the last of the carpenter's work was done; and even then, in consequence of the haste in which the frame had been put together and covered, it was necessary to call in a joiner, to make

some repairs. All this time, Lionel's house was in nearly the same condition; but at length both cottages were, as you may say, completed; and there they stood, side by side, on the north road, looking so exactly alike in outward form and arrangement, that they attracted general attention, and obtained the appellation of "The Twin Cottages."

Now all the satisfaction the rival families had gained by building separately, was in the possession of two large square bed-rooms, instead of one; although, singular to relate, Richard did not occupy his, within two years after his removal into the new house—and it is currently reported that Lionel's was never done off for a sleeping apartment, but left as a sort of play-room for the children, and a convenient place to shall corn in, or crack butter in rainy days. Thus, the square bed-room, which was the origin of all the unfortunate difficulties between the two families, became an object of very small importance in their eyes, long before they had experienced half the inconvenience of the separation.

The cousins were brought up to hate each other, and to do each other all possible mischief. They formed their school-fellows into distinct clans, that waged perpetual war, and gave their teachers, as well as themselves, a great deal of trouble and unhappiness; until all respectable and well meaning boys got to shun the Feltons, as if their influence had been contaminating.

Not many months had elapsed, before both families saw the convenience of living so near together, the proximity of their houses affording every inducement and facility to quarrel. The cousins three stones at each other over the board-fence which had been built on the dividing line of the two estates; they got each other's balls, when knocked over by accident, and refused to give them up; and once, when an unconscious chicken of Lionel's stole timely thro' the fence, to pick a grain of corn out of Richard's yard, Wolcott set the dog upon it, and afterwards threw its dead carcass insultingly into his uncle's garden.

By way of retaliation, Edward, who at that time had no dog, loaded his father's gun, and peppered the first of Richard's geese that put its unlucky head through the fence. After this, as if impelled by some fatality, turkeys, geese, ducks and hens showed an extraordinary tendency to rush blindly upon the destruction which awaited them at the mouth of the dog and muzzle of the gun; so that numbers of the inoffensive poultry fell miserable victims to the animosity existing between the two families.

Things progressed in this happy manner, until a fat calf belonging to Lionel had the misfortune to take a fancy to some new grass which grew on the wrong side of the fence. For many days the fat animal might have been seen eating contentedly the house in two stables, which, while he hoped looked ten times more delectable, in perspective, than the most epicurean calf would have proved it to be in reality; so that when the fence was broken by a gale of wind, the devoted animal leaped gaily through the nearest break, and commenced cropping the grass with great voracity, without allowing the pure pleasure of the studen repast with a single thought of Richard's merciless dog. In five minutes, however, he was aroused from his delicious revelry, by a terrible growl; and in an instant the fangs of Nero were fastened upon his throat. Jackson and Wolcott set Nero on, while Martha, from the door of her own house, watched the sport with a heart boiling over with rage. Edward ran to the rescue; but two boys and a dog being too much for him and a calf—or two calves, as Jackson facetiously remarked—he was forced to retreat. The calf was horribly mangled, so that it died the day after, to the grief of Richard, of the infinite wrath of Lionel.

Edward, who was as much as even his parents, felt bound to retaliate. Accordingly, when Richard's best horse jumped into his father's cornfield a few weeks after, the determined youth deliberately loaded his gun, and walking up close to old Bay, shot him in the right knee. The animal was ruined, and Richard enraged. A lawsuit followed, which proved to be of endless duration, owing to the obstinacy of the contending parties, and which involved both brothers in debt, giving the lawyers of Penfield more lucrative employment than three generations of Feltons had ever done before.

In connection with the cold-blooded maiming of old Bay, an incident occurred, which, as an instance of the manner in which the brothers now annoyed each other, will well bear relating. It becoming necessary for Richard to purchase another horse, he attended an auction for the purpose, and bid high upon a fine chestnut mare, which he thought just suited for his business. His bid was eighty dollars; somebody else bid eighty-five. "Ninety," said Richard.—

"Two and a half," came from another part of the room. "Fifty," pursued Richard. "Eighty," was bid by the same unknown individual.

"It's your brother bidding against you," whispered a friend in Richard's ear.

True enough, Lionel was bidding for the horse. Resenting this interference—for he knew his brother had no use for another horse at that time—Richard was determined to outbid him. But when the horse had gone up to one hundred and twenty-five, the thought struck him that he did not want him at that price, and that Lionel wanted him still less. So he let Lionel have him; and Lionel sold him a week afterwards for eighty-seven.

In the following spring there was a freshet, and the brook, which, in its southerly course, watered first Richard's farm, and afterwards Lionel's, became swollen to an unusual degree. One afternoon, Jackson and Wolcott having been down the stream to repair some fences, discovered a spot, where, with a little assistance, the water would overflow its banks, and turning into a deep ravine, find its way to the river, without flowing through Lionel's land. No sooner was this discovery made, than the disadvantages of a brook were considered; and, concluding that a diversion of the stream would be of lasting injury to their uncle, the boys began to work with their shovels in right good earnest. In a short time a narrow, turbid channel crept sluggishly across the soft earth of the bank, then it came with greater force, carrying the mud and gravel with it; and finally it went rushing into the ravine, a perfect torrent, to the great delight of the boys, who ran away, that their share in the work might not be discovered.

On the following morning, Lionel went over his farm, to see if the west meadow still lay under water, in consequence of the overflowing of the stream, and was astonished at the sudden and mysterious manner in which the waters had subsided. The meadow was dry, and the stream had shrunk into a mere thread of water. He followed it up, until he discovered the cause. In his wrath he sent 'Squire Stone to Richard, charging him with diverting the course of the stream, and threatening a lawsuit, if the bank was not repaired. Richard knew nothing of the change in the course of the brook, and he sent back a scornful defiance to Lionel. A lawsuit followed, even more difficult and expensive than the other; it being alleged by the defendant that the stream had now found its original course, from which it had been diverted by his father, forty years before, in order to water the south part of the farm; and by the plaintiff, that the defendant had turned the water into the ravine, to do him an injury. Thus, said

the other misfortunes, the brothers had two endless lawsuits to plunge them into debt.

## CHAPTER VI.

The Conflagration.

The quarrels of Lionel and Richard proved injurious to not only themselves, but their families, and their immediate friends; but, in a certain measure, to both Church and State. They belonged to the same political party; but when Richard received the nomination for high sheriff, Lionel's friends refused to vote for him, and for the first time in ten years, the opposite party carried the day. Afterwards, Richard was nominated for State representative, and by way of retaliation, Lionel's clique went against him unanimously, throwing their influence in favor of another candidate. Owing to this split in the party, their political opponents triumphed again, and sent to the Legislature a fellow who proved a traitor to the best interests of his district. The quarrel of the brothers created a division in the church, too; the devil taking that opportunity to sow dissensions and hatred in the hearts of two-thirds of the members.

Meanwhile, Martha and Maria cherished a bitter animosity against each other, as their husbands did. They never visited the same neighbors, nor met each other at the same sewing circles, if they could help it. If Maria received an invitation to visit a friend, she was sure to assert that if Martha was to be there, before accepting it; and Martha was no less scrupulous in avoiding her sister-in-law. On one occasion, when Maria arrived at a tea-party, and found Martha there, she turned abruptly about, and went home in high indignation; in return for which demonstration, Maria, a few weeks afterwards, suddenly took her departure from a quilting-bee, when Maria, unconscious of her presence, was her appearance. These quarrels and petty spite created a great deal of scandal and ill will in the neighborhood, until the good ladies of Penfield, tired of strife and dissensions, resolved, with one accord, to drop the acquaintance of the Feltons altogether. So Martha and Maria received no more invitations to any place; and you may judge how miserable they were, living by themselves.

On the last occasion of a tea-party at Maria's house, an incident happened, which particularly had something to do with the subsequent coldness of the Penfield ladies towards the two sisters-in-law. Of course Maria was horribly jealous to see so many famous tea-drinkers visiting her rival; and she fretted and scolded about it all the afternoon. Edward took the hint, to invent some method to annoy Maria, and please his mother.

In the field in the rear of Lionel's house was a large brush-heap, the result of trimming the orchard the previous season.

"The brush is dry, and the wind in the south-west," said Edward.

"And the smoke?"

"Will hide Dick's house in a beautiful manner."

"Burn the heap, then!" cried Martha, with a malicious laugh.

Accordingly the heap was fired, and Richard's house smoked. It was a warm day, but Maria was obliged to close all the doors and windows, to keep out the suffocating cloud, which rolled down upon them before the south-west wind. In spite of all her efforts, however, the smoke got into the house, and into the eyes, and into the tempers of both her and her guests. Even the tea failed to soothe them; and the party scattered in the worst humor in the world. Maria watched the disappointed ladies, as they went away all enveloped in smoke, and laughed until the tears ran down her cheeks. Edward laughed, too, until the wind changed, and blew the fire into the fence, which he was obliged to set up all night to watch, with a couple of baskets of water for his extinguishers. After this, Richard's house was a burning furnace, as he called it, in the north-west, and smoked a juvenile party, which their cousin Martha gave, to the great distress of the poor children, who went home with tears in their eyes.

But the rival families were destined to have enough of fire and smoke, as we shall proceed to show.

After watching many months for an opportunity to shoot Richard's dog—which manifested a great deal of canine sagacity in avoiding Lionel's premises, and in scrupulously keeping on the right side of the board-fence—Edward determined to have a dog, too, as large as his uncle's.

He accordingly purchased a pup, of a breed famous for size and fierceness, and kept him chained to his kennel until he had attained to formidable proportions. In the pride and ambition of his youth, Cesar took early advantage of his freedom from the chain, to invade the territory beyond the board-fence, and declare hostilities against the unknown dog, as a matter of course, a bitter enmity towards everything that made its appearance from the other side of the fence, marched up to Cesar in true Roman fashion, and with a growl challenged him to a personal combat. The ambitious Cesar desired nothing better; but Nero's maturity and knowledge of the world were altogether too much for his youth and inexperience. Cesar was discomfited, and returned to his rightful dominions, in a frightfully mutilated condition.

Cesar for a long time did not cross the board fence again, but contented himself with growling on his own territory, at his formidable enemy, who regarded him with lofty disdain. One evening, however, four years after the removal of the brothers into their new cottages, Cesar had the audacity to chase one of Richard's cats over the line. Richard, who happened to be in the yard at the time, whistled for Nero, whose rage was unbounded on seeing his rival within his domains. A skirmish ensued, and Cesar retreated over the board fence; but Nero, too much excited to see his ordinary discretion, followed him, and fought him upon his own territory, regardless of consequences.

Lionel heard the affray, and, it being late in the evening, and quite dark, he came out with a lantern, to see what was the matter. Perceiving that Nero had Cesar by the throat, and was shaking the life out of him with considerable despatch, he placed his lantern upon the ground, and ran for a pitchfork.

Observing that his brother was about to make use of that formidable weapon, to terminate the quarrel in favor of Cesar, Richard ran hastily to the fence, and was on the point of shouting a fierce remonstrance, when a striking accident attracted his attention. Nero had thrown Cesar against the lantern, and upset it; the candle had fallen out, and now fire flames were creeping languidly into the straw, scattered before Lionel's barn. The pressure of a foot would have extinguished the fire, and Richard's first impulse was to warn Lionel of the danger; but when he saw his brother set upon Nero with the fork, he thought, in his anger, "the wind is north, my barn will not be in danger," and held his peace, shrinking away into the darkness, to witness the result.

Pierced with the sharp thorns, Nero fled howling over the fence, pursued by Lionel, until beyond his reach. Then Lionel turned back, and to his consternation, saw the yard all in a blaze.

"Fire! fire! fire!" he shouted, trampling upon the flames. "Fire! fire! fire!"

His shouts filled the night with echoes. A moment before, Richard had been laughing in malicious triumph; but the wild, startling cries of fire smote heavily upon his conscience. Much

as he felt that Lionel had wronged him, the sight of the flames, which he might have extinguished, oppressed him with a sense of remorse.

"I am no better than an incendiary!" he muttered, in his wild excitement. "But it may not yet be too late!"

Lionel trampled upon the flames with furious energy. But the straw was dry, and he saw the fire gaining upon him, and darning his forked tongue towards the barn, threatening destruction. In despair he cast his eyes toward the house, and shouted again for help. Nobody appeared. The fire was within three yards of a large pile of straw, heaped before the barn door. Suddenly Lionel was conscious that there was somebody working by his side. He did not pause to see who it was, until the pile of straw burst forth one sheet of flames. He turned, and in the glare of light, saw his brother Richard!

The latter was laboring with desperate energy to smother the flames beneath his coat; and as his brother gazed upon him, he felt all his resentment give way to gratitude for that one act of generosity.

"Brother," said he, in a trembling voice, "I thank you; but it is too late. The barn must go."

Richard raised his eyes to his brother's face, and slowly withdrawing from the heat of the flames, murmured—

"I am sorry! I am sorry!"

"God bless you, brother! I did not expect this kindness!" exclaimed the agitated Lionel.

"This is no time to talk," said Richard, "the wind is getting into the west. I am afraid your house will go too, brother!"

As he spoke, the dry straw and hay within the barn having taken fire, the flames burst forth through the cracks and crevices, and through the thin roof, throwing a wild glare of light around.

CHAPTER VII.

The Last of the Twin Cottages.

The brothers rushed to the stables adjoining the barn, and made haste to save the horses, the carriage, and all articles of value, which could be got away with despatch. Meanwhile, Edward, who had gone to bed, was aroused by the alarm and rushed half-dressed to the scene of destruction. Jackson and Wolcott came next, and taking example from their father, exerted themselves to save their uncle's property; then several of the neighbors, aroused by the shouts of fire, and alarmed by the fearful glare of light, came hurrying to the spot.

The barn burnt like kindling wood. The stables were on fire in an astonishingly brief space of time, and the flames went surging on towards the house.

"I have everything!" shouted Richard, "and remove this wood! it is the only way to save the house!"

The wood was corded in long rows between the stables and the cottage; and following Richard's example, all hands went to work, tearing it away. But as the fire increased, the heat became insupportable. The smoke and flames rolled across the wood piles, blinding and suffocating, and conspiring with the heat to drive the fire-fighters backward. The most they could do, was to remove a few cords of the wood nearest the house; then, while some began to carry the furniture out of the cottage, others brought water from the well and cistern, and with the aid of ladders, drenched the clapholds and roof.

All efforts were vain, however. "The house must go!" said Lionel.

The wind had increased, and the advancing flames had driven the inexperienced fire-fighters from their position on the roof.

"I will mount the ladder!" cried Richard. He went up, and received the buckets from Lionel's hands, working with the energy and courage of desperation, until both cistern and well were empty.

"It is useless to work longer," said Lionel. "There is no more water."

"Then the house must surely burn!" said Richard. "And my family!" murmured Lionel, as he saw his wife and child carrying goods out of the house, or standing in the fierce light, looking up with terror and dismay at the increasing flames.

"They will be homeless!"

"Not so," replied Richard. "The old house is at your disposal. I was going to tear it down last fall, but I am glad I did not. It is yours, brother."

Lionel was too much affected to utter his thanks. At that moment a wild shout rang upon their ears. Richard's barn was on fire!

"I am ruined by my own folly and guilt!" he muttered as he descended to the ground. The brothers rushed together to the new scene of excitement. It was too late. The fire, left to itself, had crept from barn to barn, through the straw, and now Richard's stables were in a blaze. The wind had increased, and was blowing strongly from the west. Lionel neglected his own property to save that of his brother, and while the cottage of the former was left to inevitable destruction, every body ran to the rescue of Richard's. But his sister was dry, his well shallow, and between his house and barn there was a haystack in a most dangerous position. This was sure to burn, for the sparks from the barn were already falling upon it, and nothing, it was thought, could then save the cottage.

Martha had experienced a sort of fearful joy when told that Lionel's buildings were on fire; but when she saw Richard at work to save them, she also began to feel an anxiety to see the flames extinguished. This kindness towards her neighbors, was followed by many unpleasant reflections touching the past, and the sight of Martha, in distress, made her conscious that she had wronged her sister-in-law more than she had ever acknowledged to herself before. So when she saw Martha retire to the fatal fence, and weep bitterly over her misfortune, she went to her, and asked her to come into her own house. Martha felt this kindness and thanked her, but she could not go in; she must see her own cottage burn.

When the alarm was spread on Richard's side of the fence, all Maria's pity and anxiety for others, was changed to fear for the safety of her own home. Martha saw the danger, and, although a moment before she might have felt a vindictive joy at beholding Maria as unfortunate as herself, it was not so now; for even Richard's exertions in her behalf had not touched her heart like Maria's single word of kindness. Women are more impulsive than men, and nothing kills together hearts at enmity, like mutual distress; Martha and Maria fell into each other's arms, and embraced, mingling their tears together!

Richard's fears for his cottage were but too well founded. The flames blew upon it from the stack, the shingles caught, and all exertions to save it were vain. Soon its light was added to the general conflagration, and billows of fire surged upward from the roaring roof, illuminating the country for miles around.

Richard had been even more successful than his brother in saving his portable property, which he had conveyed to a safe distance from the fire. When everything was done, the brothers stood together in the glare of the fierce light which shone from Richard's house, and their families gathered around them.

"You see," said Richard, "I shall have to go with you, into the old house."

"Pardon me," replied Lionel, "I am afraid you will want it alone with your own family."

"There is room for all of us," said Richard. "There was once—there is now."

"Will you give me your hand, brother?" asked Lionel.

Richard made no reply, but extended his hand, while the dazzling light from the house betrayed the emotion visible on his features.

"We have not thriven since our separation," pursued Lionel. "Ours has been an ungaily quarrel, brother. Shall it end here?"